

in Afghanistan, what he is going to need to make sure that we continue helping this young democracy succeed.

Obviously, this is a situation where there's been progress, and there are difficulties. There's been progress when you consider the fact that millions of young girls go to school that didn't have a chance to go to school before in Afghanistan. That's incredible progress. There's progress when you realize that health care needs are being met for the first time in—around Afghanistan. There's progress when there are roads being built so farmers can get product to market. That's progress.

There's difficulties, of course, because killers can't stand this progress. And the general's job is to work with obviously not only our troops, but the thousands of troops from NATO countries there to provide the security so the progress continues. And there's been some tough fighting, and we honor our American troops who have sacrificed so that Afghanistan never becomes a safe haven again for extremists who would harm our citizens.

We talked about the comprehensive strategy necessary to succeed. I've announced more troops for Afghanistan, and the general, of course, is continuing to as-

sess his needs. But we also must make sure there's a civilian component that runs alongside our military, that there's good governance, and that there's aid programs that are effective and focused on the people of Afghanistan, and that the infrastructure progress continues to be made.

And so I want to thank you for your service; thank you for your candid briefing, General. I want to thank your family as well as all the other families who are standing by the—those who wear the uniform, as this Nation continues to defend her own security and defend young democracies.

General, you and your troops are laying the foundation for peace. You're making a sacrifice today so that future generations of Americans don't have to worry about harm coming from a place like Afghanistan and future generations of Afghans can grow up in a hopeful society. And I'm proud to be your Commander in Chief.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:01 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. David D. McKiernan, USA, commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan. He also referred to H.R. 1424.

Statement on Senate Action on Economic Stabilization Legislation *October 1, 2008*

I applaud the Senate for its strong bipartisan vote in favor of the financial rescue plan. I especially appreciate the efforts of Majority Leader Harry Reid, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Senators Chris Dodd and Judd Gregg, and the senior members of the relevant committees from both parties. They worked across the aisle to make vital improvements to the rescue package I sent Congress last month, including an expansion of deposit insurance that

will help protect the savings of American families and small businesses.

The bill the Senate passed is essential to the financial security of every American. It is aimed at helping American families who need to borrow money to buy a car or fund a college education. It is aimed at helping small businesses that depend on financing to meet their payrolls and stock their shelves. And it is aimed at helping State and local governments that rely on

the credit markets to fund basic services and meet the needs of their citizens.

The House will now take up this rescue legislation. With the improvements the Senate has made, I believe members of both parties in the House can support this legis-

lation. The American people expect, and our economy demands, that the House pass this good bill this week and send it to my desk.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 1424.

Statement on Senate Passage of India-United States Nuclear Cooperation and Nonproliferation Legislation

October 1, 2008

I congratulate the Senate on passing the United States-India Nuclear Cooperation Approval and Nonproliferation Enhancement Act, H.R. 7081. In particular, I commend the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for their leadership in crafting this important bipartisan legislation. I also thank Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell for bringing this

bill to a vote prior to the Senate's adjournment. This legislation will strengthen our global nuclear nonproliferation efforts, protect the environment, create jobs, and assist India in meeting its growing energy needs in a responsible manner.

I look forward to signing this bill into law and continuing to strengthen the U.S.-India strategic partnership.

Remarks at the 2008 United Service Organizations World Gala

October 1, 2008

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you very much. I'm proud to be here on this special night. The USO sure knows how to make a fellow feel at home; after all, that's what you've been doing for six decades. You've been making those who wear our uniform feel at home, providing them a home away from home while they defend our Nation overseas. Through many conflicts across many continents, the USO has formed a warm and loving bond with the men and women who wear our uniform. And you know what I know: They are our finest citizens, and we owe them a debt that can never be repaid.

This job comes with plenty of privileges. I haven't seen a traffic jam in 7¾ years. *[Laughter]* But no perk bestowed on a President is more satisfying than the hon-

orary title of USO. President 41 understands that as well.

I don't know if you know this or not, but my dad and I were not the only members of my family affiliated with the USO. It turns out my grandfather, Senator Prescott S. Bush, was one of the very first chairmen of the USO, and his title wasn't even honorary. *[Laughter]*

During this time of war, I've had the opportunity to witness the USO's good works firsthand. I want to thank you for your commitment to our troops and for your energy and enthusiasm and for your devotion to our wonderful country.

I do want to thank Sloan Gibson for leading this fantastic organization and for the kind introduction. I thank Ned Powell, the outgoing president; Bill Moll, chairman